

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, GE

SUBJECT: GDR AMBASSADOR SIEBER'S CALL ON THE SECRETARY:

NOVEMBER 21, 1975

1. SIEBER OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY EXTENDING GREETINGS FROM HERMANN AXEN. HE SAID AXEN HAD MENTIONED THAT HE HAD SUGGESTED TO THE SECRETARY THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ARRANGE QUOTE POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS UNQUOTE BETWEEN THE US AND GDR. SIEBER SAID THAT THE GDR'S QUOTE HIGHEST REPRESENTATIVES IN THE FOREIGN POLICY FIELD UNQUOTE HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO INFORM THE SECRETARY THAT THEY WERE READY FOR SUCH CONSULTATIONS. IF THE IDEA WERE ACCEPTABLE TO THE UNITED STATES, THE GDR PROPOSED THAT THE CONSULTATIONS COULD BE CONDUCTED SOMETIME IN 1976 BY MR. AXEN, WHO COULD VISIT THE US IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SECRET

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VOLKSKAMMER FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

2. THE SECRETARY SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO THINK ABOUT THE PROPOSAL. HE RECALLED THAT IN HELSINKI HE HAD SAID SUCH CONTACTS WOULD BE USEFUL IN PRINCIPLE AND THIS CONTINUED TO BE HIS VIEW. HE SAID THAT THE US WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH AFTER CONSIDERING THE QUESTION.

3. SIEBER CONTINUED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER ALSO SENT GREETINGS TO THE SECRETARY. SIEBER SAID FISCHER HAD NOW TAKEN OVER DIRECT CONTROL OF US-GDR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND THAT SIEBER COULD PASS PROPOSALS TO FISCHER WITHOUT HAVING TO GO THROUGH ANY INTERMEDIARIES.

4. A MAJOR PART OF THE MEETING WAS TAKEN UP WITH DISCUSSION OF THE BEIL VISIT. SIEBER STRESSED THAT BEIL WOULD CONCENTRATE ON CONCRETE MEANS OF EXPANDING US-GDR TRADE. HE SAID THE PROBABLE 1975 FIGURE OF \$42 MILLION TWO-WAY TRADE IN INDUSTRIAL GOODS WAS NOT SATISFACTORY. THE GDR HOPED TO RAISE THE FIGURE TO AROUND \$500 MILLION EACH YEAR BEFORE TOO LONG. BEIL WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A NUMBER OF EXPERTS WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN EXPLORING CONCRETE AGREEMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN MACHINE TOOLS AND IN THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. HE WOULD ALSO TALK TO DAVID ROCKEFELLER IN NEW YORK.

5. THE SECRETARY ASSURED SIEBER THAT BEIL WOULD RECEIVE A SYMPATHETIC RECEPTION. HE CAUTIONED SIEBER THAT ;FN WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE AS LONG AS THE TRADE ACT STOOD AS IT WAS. HE SAID THE ADMINISTRATION DID NOT SUPPORT THE AMENDMENTS ON EMIGRATION AND WOULD TRY TO GET THEM CHANGED. THE SECRETARY DOUBTED, HOWEVER, THAT ANYTHING WOULD BE POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER THE 1976 ELECTION. SIEBER AGREED THAT MFN WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE VERY SOON AND SAID THE GDR WOULD CONCENTRATE ON OTHER CONCRETE MEANS OF INCREASING TRADE AND EXCHANGES OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THE SECRETARY AGREED WITH THIS STRATEGY. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE RESTRICTIONS ON BOTH SIDES TO INCREASING TRADE.

6. SIEBER CONCLUDED THE DISCUSSION WITH A DESCRIPTION OF
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FRG-GDR RELATIONS AND GDR VIEWS ON DETENTE. HE SAID THINGS WERE MOVING RELATIVELY WELL BETWEEN THE GDR AND FRG WHERE CONCRETE ISSUES WERE CONCERNED, LESS WELL WHEN POLITICAL MATTERS SUCH AS CITIZENSHIP BECAME INVOLVED. HE SAID THE GDR WISHED NOW TO CONCENTRATE ON CONCRETE MATTERS SUCH AS TRADE. ECONOMIC RELATIONS WERE IN GOOD SHAPE, ALTHOUGH THE GDR CONSIDERED THAT TOO MUCH

OF ITS TRADE WAS WITH THE FRG. SIEBER HOPED THERE WOULD BE A POSSIBILITY TO REDISTRIBUTE SOME OF THE 3.2 BILLION VALUTA MARKS TRADE VOLUME OF LAST YEAR TO OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES.

7. THE SECRETARY SAID HE WAS GLAD TO HEAR THAT FRG-GDR RELATIONS CONTINUED TO DEVELOP. HE POINTED OUT THAT PROGRESS IN INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS WOULD ALSO BENEFIT THE US-GDR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. HE ADDED THAT POLITICAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE US AND GDR COULD ALSO BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM IF THE GDR REFRAINED FROM ANY ACTIONS AGAINST THE ACCESS ROUTES TO BERLIN.

8. CONCERNING DETENTE, SIEBER SAID THE GDR WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE SECRETARY'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR CONTINUATION OF THE PROCESS. HE SAID THE ONLY TWO PROBLEMS SEEN BY THE GDR AT THE MOMENT CONCERNED CSCE. THE GDR WAS CONCERNED THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD NOT BE BOUND TO TRANSFORM CSCE UNDERTAKINGS INTO CONCRETE PATTERNS OF RELATIONS. THEY WERE ALSO WORRIED BY THE APPARENT DETERMINATION IN THE WESTERN PRESS TO MAKE BASKET III THE ONLY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF CSCE.

9. THE SECRETARY ASSURED SIEBER THAT THIS WAS NOT OFFICIAL US POLICY. BASKET III WAS IMPORTANT TO US, BUT WE INTENDED TO FULFILL COMMITMENTS IN ALL SECTIONS OF THE HELSINKI DOCUMENT. HE URGED SIEBER NOT ALWAYS TO TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT TOO SERIOUSLY, ESPECIALLY IN AN ELECTION YEAR. MORE IMPORTANT WOULD BE TO FOLLOW THE MAIN LINES OF US POLICY, WHICH THE SECRETARY ASSURED SIEBER WOULD REMAIN THE SAME. INGERSOLL

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